INDO-AMERICAN HEALTH PROJECT

A beginning in the direction of providing decent clinics and hospitals to the villages is to be made soon, thanks to the initiative shown by an Indian doctor and a group of Americans. The America-India Dispensary (AID) people-to-people project being organised by Dr Ratna Alva, now practising in Chicago, hopes to bring efficient and up-to-date medical aid to the rural parts of the country where it is either absent or if at all present, it is negligible and scanty.

It is well-known that 80 per cent of India's population lives in villages. While the cities have many problems, rural conditions are far from satisfactory. In the matter of health, most of the villages are yet to hear about a clinic or hospital doctors or other trained personnel. Therefore, the America-India Dispensary project intends besides installing clinics and hospitals, to train villagers to look after their health and, what is more needed in India today, to train ignorant villagers to plan their family.

The project aims to start 12 hospitals all over India. A pilot project is to be started initially in a little village called Amathi in the Coorg District (Mysore State) of South India where a hospital/clinic is to be set up. The equipment, doctors, and the drugs for the hospital would be brought from the U.S.A. and bought from the AID funds in the States. The land and buildings, will, however, have to be financed by Indians and this has necesitated raising rupee funds. Considerable amount of funds have already been provided and work on the out-patient ward has already commenced. The out-patient ward is so designed that when all the equipment is installed, it would be able to cater to the needs of about 200 patients per day.

The in-patient ward has been designed to accommodate, initially, 30 beds but it could be further expanded along with the growth of the project. In addition, to house the trained staff whom the project authorities are getting from all over the world, it is proposed to build urgently some pre-fab houses.

All these require rupee finance and, therefore, fund is most urgently needed for the pilot project to take its final shape. The Madras(West) Round Table No.10, has agreed to participate in the fund-raising campaign. It is shortly sponsoring the premiere of the famous M.G.M. film "GRAND PRIX". The successful completion of the pilot project will naturally interest the authorities to launch the other projects soon after ~~the~~ and Madras may well be the venue for the next project.

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